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ABSTRACT

A successful inservice program designed to improve teachers' classroom discipline procedures and establish school-wide policies for behavior and conduct in an elementary school is described. The program's positive effects on both teachers and students was attributed to the following reasons: (1) The program was school-based, school-wide, and planned by the staff; (2) The training program met an identified need; (3) In-class follow-up and assistance were provided; (3) Evaluation was built into the training program; (4) Teachers learned specific techniques for improving classroom management and for increasing student time-on-task; (5) Improvements in classroom management were related to gains in students' achievement scores in math computation and reading comprehension; and (6) Support and assistance to teachers was provided throughout the program. Consequently, teachers maintained positive attitudes towards their students, towards themselves, and towards their teaching abilities. (JD)

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THREE KEYS TO SUCCESSFUL STAFF DEVELOPMENT:

EVALUATION, PARTICIPANT PLANNING AND SCHOOL-BASED PROGRAMMING

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A Cooperative Effort to Provide Educational Services to
BAKER, BRADFORD, DIXIE, FLAGLER, GILCHRIST, LEVY, NASSAU, PUTNAM, ST. JOHNS and UNION COUNTIES
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With our present emphasis on educational accountability and with shrinking educational dollars, more and more questions are being raised as to the effectiveness of inservice education. These questions include: "What are we getting for our inservice dollars?" "What effect do inservice workshops have on teachers?" "Does inservice education have any impact on student achievement?" (Wood, Thompson & Russell, 1981).

In addition to these evaluation issues, educators are also concerned with the relevance of staff development programs and with the appropriate involvement of participants in the program planning. The need for participant involvement in planning inservice programs was demonstrated in a recent NEA nationwide poll. NEA researchers asked a sample of teachers to indicate the degree of planning involvement which they preferred. Fifty-six percent of the teachers preferred programs planned by teachers as contrasted with 25% who preferred individual planning and 10% who preferred school system planning (Inservice, 1976).

Too often, in inservice training the "target" population is either too large or too small. District-wide programs, attempting to attack district-wide problems, miss the mark by assuming that all personnel have the same problem and that all personnel need the same training. The individual teacher, on the other hand, is too small a unit and too isolated to be the target for change. (Wood, Thompson, & Russell, 1981).

A healthy trend in staff development is a move to school-based in-service programming. Staff development seems most effective in affecting change when the program is school-based and school-wide. The school should be the primary unit of change; not the district or the invididual (Goodlad, 1975).

ADDRESSING THE CONCERNS

These three concerns were recently addressed by the staff of Brooker

Elementary School in Bradford County, Florida, with the assistance of the Northeast Florida Teacher Education Center. The staff at the school saw the need for staff development and requested assistance through the Teacher Education Center.

Brooker Elementary School is a small rural school with grades K-6 and a staff of twelve including teachers and principal. The Northeast Florida Teacher Education Center is a multi-district, staff development unit funded with local inservice dollars and through the State University system.

Designing and implementing an appropriate school-based inservice program, involved a great deal of pre-planning and mutual decision-making. Those involved in this process included the school staff, the district staff, the University of North Florida and the Teacher Education Center.

AN INSERVICE PLANNING MODEL

To facilitate the planning of the inservice training program making, the following 12-step model was utilized at Brooker Elementary School:

I. School staff identified needs and priorities for inservice training.
II. Staff Development personnel met with school staff to further define needs and priorities.
III. Inservice priority identified.
IV. Possible inservice consultant identified.
V. Consultant met with school staff for pre-planning and program design.
VI. Inservice program and time line established.
VII. Training delivered at the school site.
VIII. Consultant engaged in classroom observations and teacher conferences to follow-up on training.
IX. Additional training delivered based on the results of classroom observations.
X. Evaluation component implemented.
XI. Evaluations fedback to staff.
XII. Follow-up and future inservice arranged based on evaluation results.

The Brooker Staff were actively involved in planning and designing their inservice program. The request for assistance was initiated by the teachers; the teachers met with the consultant prior to the program to let him know what they wanted and expected; the teachers were involved in follow-up sessions with the consultant and participated in the evaluation study. This participant involvement in the program planning was one of the keys to success in the training.

The Brooker program was a school-wide program. The entire faculty participated voluntarily and all sessions were held at the school site. The faculty and staff made a commitment to attend the training and to try out new procedures recommended during the training.

For inservice programs to have any lasting effect, follow-up and support must be available to those involved in the training program. A great deal of assistance is frequently needed when educators attempt to implement, on the job, what they have learned in the inservice workshop (Wood, Thompson & Russell, 1981).

Follow-up was requested and arranged for by the Brooker staff. The consultant observed and met with teachers individually to discuss their efforts at change. Additional training sessions were arranged based on the consultant's classroom observations of teachers. The principal, T.E.C. Supervisor and classroom teachers themselves all provided support and encouragement to make the program successful.

THE TRAINING PROGRAM

The content of the training program, as developed in the first three steps of the model, was classroom management and discipline. This topic is a concern for teachers nationwide and Brooker Elementary

School was no exception. The principal and the teachers all saw the need to improve classroom discipline procedures and to establish school-wide policies for behavior and conduct. All were committed to improving the situation. This desire for improvement is consistent with Wood, Thompson and Russell's (1981) statement that professional growth requires both a personal and a group commitment to behave differently.

A University of North Florida professor, with extensive experience in conducting classroom management training programs, was contacted and invited to meet with the staff. The consultant agreed and a date was set in the late Spring to begin planning the program. During the planning sessions, the teachers listed their concerns and goals for the training. The consultant, after listening to these concerns, outlined tentative plans to begin training during the pre-planning period of the following school year. Consensus was reached on the training content and time line.

The actual classroom management training program began in August during pre-school planning. Two full days were spent learning specific behavioral techniques for managing student behavior. Basically, this approach involved:

(1) Establishing school and classroom expectations for behavior.

(2) Developing strategies for rewarding appropriate behavior.

(3) Developing strategies for extinguishing inappropriate behavior.

(4) Developing strategies for keeping students "on-task".

During the ten week training program, workshop sessions were interspersed with classroom observations of individual teachers. The consultant visited classrooms at the teacher's request, and during the

life of the training all teachers requested individual assistance. The goal of the classroom visits was to assist teachers to implement the behavioral techniques taught during the workshop. Demonstration teaching was also utilized by the consultant to show specifically how techniques were to be used.

LIMITATIONS

The following limitations should be considered in reviewing the evaluation data from Brooker:

- The school is small, rural and isolated in nature.
- The test-re-test phenomena may have effected student achievement scores.
- A control group was not available for comparision purposes.
- The fact that the school and staff were being studied may have effected their performance.

Any conclusions or generalizations drawn, should be tempered by these limitations.

EVALUATION

During the planning stages of the program, it was agreed that evaluation efforts should address two major areas:

(1) The effects, if any, of the program on teacher attitudes and behavior.

(2) The effects, if any, of the program on student achievement.

Most evaluation efforts in inservice education focus only on ratings of the participants' satisfaction with the workshop and the consultant. The Brooker staff decided to go one step further and evaluate the program's effects on teachers' attitudes and behaviors and on student achievement.

The instruments used for pre-and post-testing included:

(1) The Teacher Attitude Survey (adapted from Currin & Fuhrmann, Discovering Your Teaching Self, 1975). This survey asks teachers to rate three major areas: their classroom atmosphere, students in their class and themselves as classroom teachers.

(2) The Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills, Forms S and T. The Mathematics Computation and Reading Comprehension were the two sub-tests administered.

(3) Anecdotal records of teachers, the principal, and the consultant concerning specific observations and reactions to the program.

Pre-testing took place during the second week of the school year. Post-testing took place ten weeks later during the twelfth week of the school year.

RESULTS

The teacher attitude survey contains 17 items which respondents are asked to rate on a seven point semantic differential. A high score indicates a more positive attitude, a low score indicates a more negative attitude. Both the class atmosphere and the student subsections contain 6 items with a maximum possible score of 42 each. The attitude toward self sub-section contains 5 items for a maximum possible score of 35. The maximum total score on the entire survey is 119.

A table summarizing the results of the pre-and post-testing on the Teacher Attitude Survey is presented on the next page. All teachers completed both the pre-and post-testing:

MEAN GROUP SCORES

	Classroom Atmosphere	Attitude Toward Students	Attitude Toward Self As Teacher	Total
Pre-test	33.11	32.77	30.14	96.02
Post-test	38.55	35.67	31.67	105.89
Difference	+5.44	+2.90	+1.53	+9.98

RESULTS (cont.)

The Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills is a series of batteries for kindergarten through grade 12. National norms and percentiles for each battery by grade level have been established. For the purposes of this project, only the Mathematics Computation and Reading Comprehension Test batteries were utilized.

The results of the pre-and post-testing on the CTBS, by grade level, are reported on the next page:

Grade	READING COMPREHENSION		MATH COMPUTATION	
	Pre-Test Percentile	Post-Test Percentile	Pre-Test %-tile	Post-Test %-tile
1	26%	63%	33%	76%
2	13%	41%	25%	65%
3	24%	44%	9%	30%
4	41%	45%	21%	38%
5	58%	69%	60%	64%
6	41%	44%	40%	47%

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

Several findings seem worthy of discussion. In terms of the teachers' attitudes towards themselves, their students and the classroom atmosphere, improvements were reported across the board on the attitude survey. Often, at the start of the school year, teachers return to the classroom with a positive attitude and a renewed spirit. Such was the case at Brooker Elementary School. However, by the fifth or sixth week of school these good feelings usually wear off and teachers' attitudes show a negative swing. Such was not the case at Brooker Elementary School. Teachers began the year with positive attitudes and these attitudes showed improvement during the life of the training program.

Following the training program, teachers rated their classroom atmosphere as more encouraging, more comfortable, and more organized. They rated their students as more capable, more friendly and more interested in learning.

Teachers also rated themselves as more confident, more organized and more optimistic. The classroom management training program, while not intended as a morale booster, and not addressing teacher attitudes during the training sessions, seems to have had a positive impact on the teachers' outlooks and dispositions.

Two explanations for these improvements seem plausible. First, the teachers may have felt better because their teaching improved. They learned specific skills which they could and did implement in their individual classrooms. As a result, their classroom organization and discipline improved.

Secondly, a support system for the teachers was established. Encouragement and assistance were provided to the teachers as they implemented new ideas and techniques. The consultant provided assistance as he visited teachers in their classes. Teachers communicated more frequently and more openly with one another. These support systems seem to have had a positive impact on improving teacher morale and teacher attitude.

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

In terms of student achievement, gains were recorded at all levels. These gains are consistent with Good & Brophy's (1979) findings that teachers' managerial abilities are positively related to student achievement.

The largest gains in Math and Reading achievement were recorded in Grades 1, 2 and 3. These gains in the primary grades are consistent with Stallings' (1975) research. She found that teachers' classroom practices were related to student learning and that more time-on task led to higher Reading and Math scores in Grades 1, 2 and 3. Primary students seem to need a more structured learning environment.

The data gathered at the Brooker School also support Brophy & Everton's (1976) contention that classroom management skills correlate with student achievement. This is true not only because skilled managers make sure that students stay on task, but also because good managers tend to be good instructors (and vice versa). As the teachers at Brooker Elementary School become more effective in classroom organization, their students spent more time-on-task. Consequently, achievement scores improved in reading comprehension and math computation.

ANECDOTAL DATA

During the life of the training program the consultant visited each classroom. His observational records indicate that prior to the training, approximately 45% of the teachers' time was devoted to direct instruction and time-on-task. Following the training, teachers devoted approximately 75% of their classroom time to on-task learning activities. This 30% increase in instructional time has obvious implications for student achievement. These findings support Duffy's (1982) statement that effective teachers maximize the class time available for instructional activities.

The principal at Brooker also supplied anecdotal data for evaluation purposes. Her records indicate that prior to the training, she had four to five students referred to her daily by teachers for discipline purposes. Following the training, the number of discipline referrals decreased to two to three per week.

This decrease in the number of discipline referrals seems to be related to the teachers' in-class effectiveness. Classroom control and discipline improved as students spent more time-on-task. Teachers apparently became more effective classroom managers and handled their own discipline

problems within the classroom.

SUMMARY

The staff development training program at Brooker Elementary School seems to have had a positive effect on both teachers and students alike. These effects may, in part, be related to the following:

- The program was school-based, school-wide and planned by the staff.
- The training program met an identified need.
- In class follow-up an assistance was provided.
- Evaluation was built into the training program.
- Teachers learned specific techniques for improving classroom management and for increasing student time-on-task.
- Improvements in classroom management were related to gains in students' achievement scores in math computation and reading comprehension.
- Support and assistance to teachers was provided throughout the program. Consequently, teachers maintained positive attitudes towards their students, towards themselves and towards their teaching abilities.

Staff development can be an effective tool for educational improvement when evaluation, participant planning and school-based programming are an integral part of the training. Those involved in staff development need to address these three issues in future training and research.

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